Grade: 3rd – 6th
Time: ½ hour
Season: All

Carmaleetas

National Science Teaching Standards

A. Science as **INQUIRY**
C. LIFE Science
F. Science in **PERSONAL** and **SOCIAL PERSPECTIVE**

Objective:

Students will understand principle of predation, predator-prey relationships and food chains in nature.

Pre Activity:

- Students define predator, prey, food chain, food web.
- With a partner, have students list as many as predator/prey relationships they can in 1 minute. Share the lists with class.

Equipment:

- Caramel candies (at least 20-25 for a group of 10-13 students)
- Easel paper and marker (optional)
- Worksheet and pencil for each student (or draw the chart on the chalkboard)

Procedure:

1. Before you do this game, pick your habitat on the park grounds. Ideally, it should be an open area with a good deal of "edge" habitat available. The area south of the parking lot works well. Distribute the "carmaleetas" (caramel candies) just prior to the activity. Do not try to hide them too much, put some in the open, some in holes, stump crevasses, etc.
2. Discuss with the group what a predator is. Explain they are going to become predators by hunting down, skinning, and eating small animals that live in this area. Describe the "animal" as completely as possible: about 1" long, female light brown, males with dark brown stripes, very slow moving, likes "edge" habitat, prefers sunning itself on leaves, dislikes full sun, dies immediately upon being touched, thin skin (can skin with fingernail), etc. The animal is quiet and unobtrusive and is called, "carmaletta."
3. En route to the area where you saw the carmaleetas, briefly visit or point out several possible habitats they would like (parking lot, field, hardwood forest edge) asking the students the suitability for carmaleetas in each one. The first student finding one should shout "carmaleeta" so others can more easily locate them. When you hear the first "carmaleeta cry" allow everyone one minute to find at least one prey (carmaleeta). If after the 1 minute round, the students do not find a prey, they must drop out as "dead predators" (died of starvation). Play as many one minute rounds as

it takes for the last predator to "die," keeping tally for all the rounds on the number of carmaleetas caught. Students should not eat the carmaleetas yet!

4. When the last predator has "died," gather the students together to discus what has occurred. Discussions to center around: uneven sex ratios, searching strategies, food chains and webs, carrying capacity of the habitat, why some prey escaped the hunt…

Post Activity:

- Make a graph of the tallied carmaleeta data you gathered at Springbrook**.**
- Play "Oh, Deer" activity on playground. (See *Project Wild* for directions)

Post Discussion:

- Review the discussion at Springbrook (#4 questions).
- Discuss the importance of balance in a habitat and how other habitats are affected by the imbalance or balance of another habitat.
- Discuss how people can affect the "carmaleeta" habitat.
- How do we affect real habitats, both, good and bad.
- Discuss importance of recording data as a scientist. What insight did the data records give to you about the predator/prey relationship?
- In what ways do scientists collect data?
- How has collecting data throughout history helped scientists?

Carmaleeta Tally Sheet

Round	Males	Females
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		